

# Treacherous Coattails: Gubernatorial Endorsements and the Presidential Race in Kenya's 2017 Election

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## Abstract:

Could there be coattail effects in the absence of strong parties? How would these effects manifest in countries with ethnic and personality-based politics? Kenya's 2017 election presents an opportunity for a theoretical and empirical contribution to the study of coattail effects in such settings. With the newly-created and highly attractive positions of county governors, down-ticket races became a lot more competitive, forcing parties to make difficult choices in terms of campaign focus, the apportioning of resources across the ballots, and how to maintain or forge alliances with local leaders whose networks were key to success in the battlegrounds. Presidential candidates found themselves in a precarious position: endorsing governor aspirants in competitive races could lead to a backlash and cost them votes, failure to endorse could signal lack of confidence in key figures and thus potentially jeopardize all six positions on the ballot. This paper draws on theories of coattail effects in democracies and adapts them to better understand the relationship between the races for governor and president in Kenya's 2017 election. I argue that coattail effects are conditional on governors receiving clear and public endorsements by the presidential candidates and that effects flow from presidential candidates to governor aspirants in parties' strongholds, and vice-versa in battleground counties. The incumbent Jubilee party was better able to harness gubernatorial coattail effects because of its ability to field single candidates and entice popular local leaders to either join the ticket or stand down in favour of ticket holders. The findings have broader implications for theories of coattail effects, campaign strategy, legislative fragmentation, and citizen-politician linkages in settings with personality-based politics and weakly-institutionalised parties.

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## Introduction

In the August 2017 election for governor in Homa Bay in former Nyanza Province – a stronghold of opposition leader Raila Odinga - the incumbent governor, Cyprian Awiti from Odinga’s Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), faced two independents: Oyugi Magwanga and Omedo Misama. Magwanga had decided to stand as independent over his dissatisfaction with the ODM nomination process. He promised a massive campaign in order to unseat Awiti and warned the incumbent not to be complacent just because he had secured the party nomination: *“This time no one will hang on Baba’s [Raila Odinga’s] coat. Let all of them face the voters.”*<sup>1</sup> Magwanga declared his support for Raila for president, reassured him ODM votes in Homa Bay were safe, but urged Raila not to interfere in the local races and cautioned he should leave Homa Bay residents to vote for leaders of their choice. Kakamega governor aspirant Boni Khalwale expressed similar sentiments: he told Odinga all candidates on the National Super-Alliance (NASA) affiliate party tickets would campaign for him, but advised him to “keep off local politics”.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere, calls for “6-piece voting” – choosing party candidates for all six elected positions – were opposed by Odinga’s own coalition partners within NASA.<sup>3</sup>

The incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta faced similar challenges in his Central Kenya strongholds. More than 20 candidates stood for governor in the Jubilee core areas of Nyeri, Laikipia, Nakuru, Embu, Meru, Kiambu, Nyandarua and Laikipia.<sup>4</sup> The battle in Kirinyaga was particularly heated with former presidential candidate Martha Karua facing former Devolution Secretary Anne Waiguru. Kenyatta needed maximum turn-out in Central Kenya in order to retain the presidency so he had to make sure both Karua’s and Waiguru’s supporters turned out on election day. Unlike in Homa Bay where independents had reassured Odinga of their support, independents in Mount Kenya explicitly cautioned Kenyatta that if they were not allowed to run, or an endorsement was issued for another candidate, their supporters would have no reason to come to the polls. Hence Kenyatta’s “tough balancing act”: when on the campaign trail in Mount Kenya, he refused to endorse either candidate and repeatedly stated: *“All these candidates are on our side. It is upon you to choose whom you want.”*<sup>5</sup> Jubilee strategists saw contested races for governors and the other down-ticket positions on the 2017 ballot – senators, MPs, women representatives, and MCAs – as potentially turn-out boosting: *“Independent candidates will do for Jubilee and the President what Jubilee candidates going it alone can’t do, which is, to increase voter turnout.”*<sup>6</sup>

These examples underscore some of the ways, in which devolution has complicated Kenya’s politics. Dynamics, which were just emerging in 2013 when the newly-created positions of governors, senators, women’s representatives, and members of county assemblies (MCAs) were first added to the electoral ballot, were on full display in the 2017 election. As intended by the 2010 constitution-drafters, county government positions became a focal point for Kenya’s aspiring political leaders, easing some of the pressure on the presidential contest. The governorships were highly sought after and dubbed “mini presidencies” because of the resources and relative autonomy attached to the positions.<sup>7</sup> And while in 2013 national leaders remained on the side-lines in gubernatorial campaigns<sup>8</sup>, in 2017 local dynamics were much more prominent in party strategists’ calculus. This increased attention was driven both by the influx of well-known politicians with a national profile to the gubernatorial contests raising the profile and competitiveness of these races,<sup>9</sup> and by parties’ realisation that local-level contests had the potential to impact the all-important presidential election. In 2017, parties faced new dilemmas in terms of campaign focus,

whether to grant or withhold endorsements, how to ensure popular candidates joined or remained on the ticket, and how to guarantee party unity behind a single candidate.

The effect of candidates' popularity on other candidates' electoral chances is the subject of a large literature on "coattail effects". This literature is highly relevant for Kenya's 2017 election and beyond precisely because of the introduction of "six-piece voting" with Kenya's devolved constitution – the largest institutional innovation in Kenya's political process since decolonization. The coattails literature has implications for campaign strategy and for outcomes beyond electoral campaigns, such as countries' citizen-politician linkages, levels of party system fragmentation, legislative coalitions, and government stability.

Research on coattail effects outside of established democracies is rare.<sup>10</sup> Few studies have attempted to explicitly theorize or capture coattail effects in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>11</sup> In Kenya, the literature on the interplay between local and national factors in determining the popularity of presidential candidates and MPs in multi-party elections since the early 1990s is rich and varied,<sup>12</sup> but few studies attempt to develop a general theory of coattail effects applicable more broadly.

Kenya provides an opportunity for a theoretical contribution to the study of coattail effects in settings with weakly-institutionalised parties, patronage politics, and highly salient ethnic divisions. Drawing on the literature on "three-piece suit" voting prior to 2010<sup>13</sup> and more recent studies of the impact devolution made to the 2013 election, this paper adapts models of coattail effects to the Kenyan context and applies them to the 2017 election. The goal is to examine the extent to which coattail effects influenced the gubernatorial and presidential races in particular, and to derive some broadly generalizable insights of coattail effects applicable to Kenya and beyond.

In the next section, I review the main theories and findings of the literature on coattail effects. Informed by the literature on the interplay between local and national factors in determining the political fortunes of presidential candidates and MPs in Kenya, I derive several expectations regarding how coattails effects should play out in the Kenyan context. I then examine the evidence of both coattails and reverse coattails effects in the 2017 election in section 3. The final section develops the implications of the empirical analysis for broader theories of coattails effects in developing countries with highly salient ethnic divisions, and proposes several avenues for future empirical research and theoretical extension.

### **Coattail Effects in the Kenyan Context**

As originally defined by Miller in US congressional elections, presidential coattails occur when "the congressional vote decision is motivated by the appeal of the presidential candidate" i.e. congressional candidates ride into office on the popularity of the President.<sup>14</sup> Thus, a popular presidential candidate is able to translate into additional votes for other executive and legislative candidates from the same party, votes which those candidates would otherwise not have received. When a candidate's margin of victory is larger than those of other candidates on the same ballot, that candidate is said to have larger coattails: a sign of their "vote-pulling power".<sup>15</sup> Coattail effects can flow in the opposite direction as well - from popular down-ticket candidates up the ballot: or from parliamentary, senatorial, or gubernatorial candidates to the presidential contenders. The "reverse coattail effect" is the

ability of a popular candidate to boost the support for an up-ticket candidate from the same party.<sup>16</sup>

Since its initial formulation, numerous studies have found evidence of presidential coattail effects in the US context for both congressmen and senators<sup>17</sup>, and beyond the US in settings as diverse as mayoral elections in Germany and the Netherlands, and governorships in Brazil and Mexico.<sup>18</sup> Two mechanisms underlie the translation of popularity from one candidate to others: partisanship and campaign communication and spending. Partisanship translates into votes for down-ticket candidates when party members, motivated by their support for the presidential candidates, vote straight ticket either as a cognitive short-cut or out of a desire to give their preferred candidates a stronger mandate to implement policies.<sup>19</sup>

But would a popular candidate translate into down-ticket votes for their party among non-partisans or undecideds? The literature suggests ballot structure may affect how neatly the popularity of one translates into votes for all: when ballots are closed (as with electoral lists, for example), voters cannot split tickets so a popular candidate would be able to draw and translate the votes of non-partisans or undecideds to other candidates on the same ballot.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, when split tickets are an option, as with most concurrent presidential and lower level elections, coattail effects among undecideds or non-partisans should be smaller.

How would coattail effects manifest in the absence of strong parties and in settings with ethnic and personality-based politics? Adams Oloo writes that “a remarkable feature of Kenyan political parties is [their] little institutionalisation” and lack of proper party structures outside of major urban centres.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, Throup and Hornsby note the presence of presidential coattails benefiting MPs in Kenya immediately after the re-introduction of competitive elections in 1992.<sup>22</sup> Kenya’s elections have also been characterized by a high degree of down-ticket volatility, frequent defections, and unpredictable down-ballot races, in which local issues and cleavages have determined the winners for ‘marginal’ or swing seats in particular, but also in areas considered as presidential candidates’ strongholds.<sup>23</sup> Vote totals for parliamentary and presidential candidates have differed in what Karuti Kanyinga has termed a “mix-and-match [of] parties and persons”.<sup>24</sup> How can we explain this variation in the manifestation of coattail effects across regions and candidates?

While much of the literature in the US context assumes strong partisanship as a key mechanism underlying coattail effects, studies of newly-democratizing states show coattails can be present even in the absence of strong national parties.<sup>25</sup> In the absence of strong partisan identification and in settings of highly personalized politics, public and visible endorsements during the campaigns (appearing together during rallies, for example) signals the more popular candidate’s support. It is the personalized nature of politics and the relative weakness of party structures and ideology that necessitates political association between candidates be overtly and publicly signalled. Thus, we can expect public endorsements to play a key role in producing coattail effects where partisanship is weak and politics centres on influential personalities.

In Kenya, the largest positive effect of presidential popularity on down-ticket races – or the strongest presidential coattails – should be evident in parties’ ethnic strongholds. Given voting margins of close to or over 90% in past presidential elections in Central Kenya or Luo Nyanza, candidates appearing on the same ticket as Raila Odinga or Uhuru Kenyatta respectively should expect to easily coast to victory in these areas. However, in the absence of strong partisanship and given the large number of independents also vying for the seats,

**coattail effects in strongholds should be conditional on presidential endorsements.**

Withholding endorsements where politics is highly personalized would seriously undercut coattail effects. There are at least two reasons for presidential candidates to abstain from endorsing down-ticket candidates in their core areas: alienating potential supporters and suppressing turnout. The incentives of down-ticket candidates and those of presidential candidates in the strongholds are mis-aligned: down-ticket candidates seek endorsements to gain power, while presidential candidates fear endorsing candidates down ballot can be treacherous and cost them votes.

Weak partisanship is both a cause and a consequence of this dilemma: it is *because* parties are weak and seen as mere vehicles for presidential ambitions and because transparent and meritocratic nomination processes are often lacking in primary elections,<sup>26</sup> that a high number of viable candidates choose to stand as independents. When these independents threaten the presidential vote so the presidential candidates avoid endorsing parties' ticket holders, this opens the possibility that more independents are elected where partisanship should be strongest: in candidates' strongholds. Thus, paradoxically, **weak parties and disputed primaries can further reinforce political fragmentation in Kenya through the treacherous coattails effect in candidates' strongholds.**

It is important to note that this danger exists to the extent that down-ticket candidates refuse to accept the results of parties' primaries. Apart from improving the fairness and transparency of the primary selection process, Kenya's experience with democracy prior to 2017 shows that candidates' compliance can be ensured in various other ways: through intimidation, bribery, offers of government positions, lucrative business contracts, etc.<sup>27</sup> Thus, devolution can result in an increase in such informal 'accommodation' measures as parties attempt to safeguard against the added unpredictability of coattail effects flowing from three additional positions on the ballot. Incumbent parties should be advantaged as they are better placed to be able to purchase down-ballot compliance: therefore, **presidential coattails should be larger for down-ballot candidates of incumbent parties.**

How has devolution shifted the political calculus in Kenya's battlegrounds or "swing" areas? Presidential candidates in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa have long relied on endorsements by local 'big men' or ethnic 'kingpins' for votes outside of their home areas. In return for martialling votes for their preferred candidates, popular local leaders would often be rewarded with government positions, projects, district headquarters lucrative contracts, etc. Studies of 3-piece voting in Kenya prior to 2010 demonstrate how this logic applied to MPs outside of parties' core areas throughout the 90s and often benefited the incumbent Kenya African National Union (KANU) party.<sup>28</sup>

What is new with Kenya's 2010 devolved constitution is the number of additional positions becoming available for this local quid-pro-quo, and the added autonomy, resources, and prestige attached to the governorships in particular. In a sense, allowing popular local leaders to formally contest in elections on the same ballot as the president solves a credible commitment problem inherent in the largely informal prior system of cross-ethnic endorsements. With devolution, local leaders' access to power and significant autonomy depends solely on their ability to garner votes. Presidential candidates have incentives to strongly and visibly associate with popular local leaders in the hope of riding on their reverse (ethnic) coattails. **Such reverse coattails should be strongest in areas where communities have clear leaders - in other words, where there is little intra-communal leadership**

**contestation - and for the presidential candidates whose party tickets these leaders appear on.**

If, however, multiple claims to local power exist and communities are split among several potential ‘kingpins’, presidential candidates again could find reverse coattails treacherous. Here, there is a double danger: first, being endorsed by and associate with one local leader when communities are split risks alienating the supporters of the rest. But failing to endorse a leader engaged in a local popularity battle could further weaken the latter’s position within the community and can end up jeopardizing the entire ticket. Thus, parties in divided battlegrounds find themselves in a double-bind: there are risks associated with both endorsing and not endorsing candidates. This dynamic can further exacerbate the already high volatility and unpredictability of politics in these areas. Given also that there are some very desirable positions to fill (the governors and MCAs in particular), popular local leaders can split between the main parties. Parties in these settings have an incentive to hedge: ensure they have popular local leaders stand for at least some of the 6 positions on their ballots. For example, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) and the National Alliance (TNA) allocated a position on their tickets for each clan in the 2013 Kisii County elections.<sup>29</sup> Such hedging mitigates against the risk of alienating voters, but increases the overall unpredictability of the results.

In sum, presidential coattails should be strongest in candidates’ strongholds, conditional on endorsements. If local elections are highly competitive, presidential candidates will withhold endorsements, at the risk of increasing party fragmentation in the strong-holds. Reverse coattails should be present in the battle-grounds conditional on the most popular local leaders vying for elections and would benefit the presidential candidate whose party the local kingpins join. The next section examines to what extent these expectations were borne out in Kenya’s 2017 election.

## **Presidential Coattails and Reverse Coattails in the 2017 Kenyan Election**

### ***Coattail Effects in the 2017 Election***

To what extent did presidential candidates’ popularity translate into votes for down-ballot candidates from the same parties in 2017? In this paper, I focus on gubernatorial races for a number of reasons: these were the most attractive of the new local government positions up for grabs because of their relative autonomy and resources; in 2017 they attracted some of the most popular and visible Kenyan politicians so they had the highest potential for large reverse coattails; and there is reliable data on whether gubernatorial candidates were endorsed or not throughout the campaigns. This allows me to examine both the determinants of granting endorsements across the strongholds and the battlegrounds, and their consequences for the gubernatorial and presidential races.

Table 1 lists the voting margins (the differences between the winners and runners-up in percentages) for president and governor in the 17 counties considered Jubilee strongholds in the 2017 election.

Table 1. Winning Margins for President and Governor in Jubilee Strongholds in 2017

<i>County</i>	<i>President vote margin</i>	<i>Governor vote margin</i>	<i>Governor endorsed?</i>
Mandera	69.63	7.64	No
Meru	78.59	9.15	No
Embu	85.11	0.23	No
Nyeri	97.15	50.24	No
Kirinyaga	97.58	13.31	No
Muranga	96.1	37.98	No
Laikipia	78.74	1	No (Indep. Elected)
Tharaka-Nithi	87.22	39.76	No
Nyandarua	98.2	67.37	Yes
Kiambu	85.61	57.12	Yes
Uasin Gishu	56.6	14.38	Yes
Elgeyo-Marakwet	89.78	20.99	Yes
Nandi	74.35	86.34	Yes
Baringo	70.21	45.64	Yes
Nakuru	70.05	75.02	Yes
Kericho	86.17	90.44	Yes
Bomet	74.88	34.4	Yes

Kenyatta outperformed governor aspirants in all but three of these counties (Nandi, Nakuru, and Kericho). Ethnicity is certainly part of the explanation: the latter counties are all majority Kalenjin areas in the former Rift Valley – stronghold of vice-president William Ruto, an ethnic Kalenjin.

Governor aspirants who were formally endorsed by Kenyatta won by higher margins than governor aspirants who were not (average vote margins were 53% for endorsed governors and 17% for non-endorsed ones).<sup>30</sup> The differences are particularly striking in Embu, Laikipia, Mandera, and Meru, where Kenyatta won landslides while the governor races were very competitive. In Laikipia, the Jubilee nominee incumbent governor Joshua Irungu lost the race to independent Nderitu Muriithi after Kenyatta refused to endorse a candidate during his campaign visits to the area.<sup>31</sup> It could be argued that had Jubilee nominees secured an endorsement, they would have won with much more comfortable margins, given the overwhelming popularity of the President. This is why all aspirants contesting on Jubilee tickets pushed for endorsements, while independents cautioned and at times openly warned the President against favouring down-ballot candidates.<sup>32</sup>

Nyandarua and Kiambu provide a key comparison in this respect as the only counties in the majority Kikuyu former Central Province where Kenyatta took sides in the local “supremacy battles”. In Nyandarua, it was Deputy VP Ruto who called for a six-piece vote and introduced Jubilee candidates during rallies, while Kenyatta “steered clear of the subject and was evidently reluctant to even endorse the Jubilee candidates”.<sup>33</sup> In Kiambu, Kenyatta’s home area, the President openly endorsed Waitutu for governor against incumbent William

Kabogo. Kenyatta’s endorsement was interpreted as a “major setback” for Kabogo’s re-election chances implying that the race would have been much closer otherwise.<sup>34</sup>

To what extent did the popularity of governor aspirants influence endorsement decisions? Kabogo was the least popular among Kenya’s 47 incumbent governors with an approval rating of 48% according to an Infotrak public opinion survey conducted between December 2014 and February 2015.<sup>35</sup> This may be part of the reason why Kenyatta chose to make an exception in endorsing Kabogo’s challenger, but it does not explain why the challenger in Nyandarua was also endorsed despite running against a relatively popular incumbent, and why endorsements were withheld from popular incumbents in Jubilee strongholds in the former Central province, such as Muranga’s Mwangi Wa Iria (69.6%) and Meru’s Peter Munya (64.5%).

Where Jubilee governor aspirants were publicly endorsed during the campaigns – largely in the majority Kalenjin areas of the former Rift Valley Province – they won by much higher margins, *regardless of their popularity*. The evidence suggests that presidential coattails in Jubilee strongholds were conditional on candidates actually securing party endorsements.

Did these patterns hold in opposition strongholds? Table 2 shows the winning margins for president and governor in the counties viewed as NASA (National Super Alliance) strongholds in 2017. Unlike Jubilee, NASA was a loose coalition of several political parties – Odinga’s ODM, Kalonzo Musyoka’s Wiper Democratic Movement, Moses Wetangula’s Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) – Kenya, Musalia Mudavadi’s Amani National Congress (ANC), Isaac Ruto’s Chama Cha Uzalendo –and a number of smaller parties. In that sense – and much more so than with Jubilee’s Kikuyu-Kalenjin alliance, these were not Raila Odinga’s strongholds but rather the (ethnic) strongholds of the five co-principals within NASA.

Table 2. Winning Margins for President and Governor in NASA Strongholds in 2017

County	President vote margin	Governor vote margin	Governor endorsed?
Machakos	63.32	8.6	Yes (Indep. Elected)
Vihiga	80.27	9.18	No
Homa Bay	98.85	5.6	No
Kitui	61.92	15.73	No
Taita Taveta	43.37	14.78	No
Kakamega	75.85	45.91	Yes
Bungoma	37.91	5.36	Yes
Busia	74.36	4.16	Yes
Siaya	98.45	4.27	Yes
Kisumu	95.68	27.13	Yes
Migori	70.76	26.84	Yes
Makueni	82.33	79.95	Yes
Mombasa	40.79	44.43	Yes

Odinga outperformed governors in all but one stronghold county (Mombasa). In the four counties where governor aspirants did not receive formal endorsements, governors’ winning

margins were smaller than in the counties where governor aspirants were publicly endorsed (the average vote margin for endorsed candidates was 29.7%, compared to 10.7% for those who did not receive an endorsement in NASA strongholds). Yet, governor races in Busia and Siaya where Odinga won by 74% and 98% respectively (Siaya is also Odinga's home county) and ODM governor candidates *did* receive endorsements, were very competitive. In Machakos, Wiper nominee Wavinya Ndeti secured Kalonzo's endorsement yet lost to incumbent governor Alfred Mutua. These results are puzzling for theories of coattail effects.

One explanation for the results in Busia and Siaya could lie in independent candidates' behaviour in these two counties: unlike independents in Kenyatta's strongholds who had warned their supporters might stay home on election day, independents in Odinga's strongholds had vowed to actively campaign for the ticket and mobilize their supporters to turn out in large numbers. Independents in Busia and Siaya were effectively re-fighting ODM nominations on election day. Their pledge to support Odinga meant that he did not risk lower turn-out by endorsing candidates and independents' support for a "6 minus 1" piece voting and mobilization efforts translated into close to maximum turnout in the two counties.

Why did independents in Odinga's backyard display such loyalty while those in Kenyatta's did not? One plausible explanation is that independents in opposition strongholds know that refusing to support Odinga would be the "kiss of death" for their chances both for this and future elections. Independents in incumbent strongholds, on the other hand, can leverage their support for resources and government positions. Another plausible explanation points to the power of "Odingaism" – the veneration of Raila Odinga's family which has also developed some elements of political ideology – in Luo Nyanza. "Odingaism" holds considerable sway in Luo Nyanza and political aspirants have eschewed expressing disapproval of Raila in the past, most notably during the first elections for Senator and Governor in 2013.<sup>36</sup> Yet the pull of Odingaism does not extend to approval for Raila's chosen candidates for lower government positions. The 2013 primaries had seen a revolt against the Odinga family's attempt to impose candidates in light of significant irregularities in the nomination process. Raila's brother – Dr. Oburu Odinga lost the primaries for the Siaya gubernatorial seat on a CORD ticket in 2013.<sup>37</sup> A number of other Raila allies also lost Siaya primaries and Raila's appeal for a six-piece voting in Kisumu in 2013 fell on deaf ears as voters elected an MP for Kisumu Town West on a Ford Kenya ticket. Voters expressed desire to vote for Raila as president but insisted "he should leave us to choose whoever we want for the other races".<sup>38</sup> This appears to have been the case in 2017 as well.

In Machakos, supremacy battles between incumbent governor Alfred Mutua and NASA co-principal Kalonzo Musyoka led the former to abandon Wiper and form his own party shortly after being elected in 2013.<sup>39</sup> Musyoka then threw his weight behind Wiper candidate Wavinya Ndeti during the campaigns, leading observers to proclaim Mutua "completely finished".<sup>40</sup> But Mutua was re-elected in no small part due to his performance record and popular campaign style (he was ranked the most popular governor in a 2015 Infotrak poll), albeit by a smaller margin than what his approval ratings would have suggested.<sup>41</sup>

In sum, the absence of coattail effects for NASA-endorsed candidates in 2017 is specific to power dynamics in Luo Nyanza and Machakos. The underlying cause is dissatisfaction with the parties' primary process: both the losing candidates and their supporters were not willing to accept the validity of primary contests and back winners. Even in ODM strongholds, partisan attachments beyond loyalty to Raila Odinga himself are questionable: members showed little knowledge of ODM ideology, constitution, or manifesto, and

perceived a mismatch between stated democratic principles and actual practices, particularly those pertaining to candidate selection.<sup>42</sup> This underscores the importance of party institution-building at the grassroots, including reformed candidate selection processes, and more inclusive and consultative decision-making. Relative to Jubilee, NASA also lacked the resources needed to buy off popular independents, or entice them with credible promises for future government positions.

Bungoma was another county, in which Odinga's performance far outpaced that of the endorsed NASA governor in 2017, pointing to unrealized potential for larger coattail effects. In the home county of NASA co-principal Moses Wetangula, Ford candidate Wafula Wangamati faced a serious challenge from the incumbent governor Ken Lusaka. Lusaka had defected to Jubilee and was a key "pointman" to Uhurutto's efforts to establish a foothold in this particular opposition stronghold. Both sides therefore endorsed and actively campaigned for their respective gubernatorial candidates in the county, the campaigns were bitter and marred by violence. In contrast to Ndeti in Machakos, Wangamati eventually prevailed in a testament to Wetangula's political heft in Bungoma.<sup>43</sup> Lusaka's popularity did not translate to reverse coattails for Kenyatta in that instance (more on reverse coattails in the Kenyan context below).

Outside of Busia, Siaya, and Bungoma, we see a clearer link between endorsements of governor aspirants and their electoral performance in NASA strongholds. Governor aspirants who had secured nominations on NASA tickets certainly believed an open endorsement would improve their chances and there was much consternation when endorsements were not forthcoming. For example, Homa Bay's governor Cyprian Awiti had been "waiting and panting for Raila to come and endorse him" throughout the campaign and was hugely disappointed when Odinga urged voters to "*put all our energy in securing the presidential seat and stop focusing on trivial seats down here*" and said "*Magwanga is also on my team*" of an independent candidate for governor.<sup>44</sup>

As expected, presidential contenders concerned with maximizing turn-out were wary of endorsing candidates in highly contested down-ballot races for fear that shunned candidates' supporters might stay home on election day. This was the reason Kenyatta abstained from endorsing governor aspirants in Central Kenya and it appears to have driven Odinga's unwillingness to grant endorsements in Vihiga, Homa Bay, and Kitui (in Taita Taveta, NASA could not agree on a single gubernatorial candidate).

To what extent were concerns about endorsements depressing turn-out in the strongholds justified? A comparison between turn-out rates in Kenyatta and Odinga strongholds, in which governor aspirants received endorsements, and those in which they did not, does not show any significant differences (Tables 3 and 4). In other words, endorsing a candidate for governor did not affect turnout in parties' strongholds in 2017. Examining presidential candidates' winning margins in their strongholds in 2013 and 2017, the rising competitiveness of down-ballot races in 2017 does not appear to have affected the presidential vote in any systematic way. While the decrease in turn-out was a national trend (45 out of the 47 counties recorded lower turn-out in 2017),<sup>45</sup> this decline did not have a significant effect on presidential winning margins.

In Jubilee strongholds, Kenyatta's vote margins declined in Mandera, Meru, Baringo, and Bomet (shaded in grey in Table 3), but increased in the other 13 counties. Odinga's margins decreased slightly in Kitui, Busia, Migori, Makueni, and Mombasa, and more significantly in

Machakos and Taita Taveta (shaded in grey in Table 4). Machakos and Bomet tell a similar story to that of Bungoma: in both, a political competitor attempted to make forays into an opponent's stronghold by riding on the reverse coattails of a popular local defector (incumbent governor Alfred Mutua for Jubilee in the former, and incumbent governor Isaac Rutto for NASA in the latter).

Table 3. Vote Margins and Turn-out in Jubilee Strongholds in 2017 and 2013

<i>County</i>	<i>President vote margin 2017</i>	<i>Turnout 2017</i>	<i>Governor endorsed?</i>	<i>President vote margin 2013</i>	<i>Turnout 2013</i>
Mandera	69.63	0.77	No	88.63	0.84
Meru	78.59	0.77	No	81.86	0.88
Embu	85.11	0.81	No	81.03	0.88
Nyeri	97.15	0.87	No	94.63	0.93
Kirinyaga	97.58	0.86	No	94.55	0.91
Muranga	96.1	0.86	No	93.49	0.94
Laikipia	78.74	0.81	No (Indep.)	72.93	0.9
Tharaka-Nithi	87.22	0.82	No	87.26	0.89
Nyandarua	98.2	0.86	Yes	95.9	0.94
Kiambu	85.61	0.83	Yes	82.32	0.91
Uasin Gishu	56.6	0.76	Yes	53.17	0.86
Elgeyo-Marakwet	89.78	0.81	Yes	87.22	0.92
Nandi	74.35	0.78	Yes	72.82	0.9
Baringo	70.21	0.82	Yes	78.52	0.91
Nakuru	70.05	0.79	Yes	63.05	0.89
Kericho	86.17	0.78	Yes	84.15	0.91
Bomet	74.88	0.81	Yes	88.07	0.9

Table 4. Vote Margins and Turn-out in Raila Odinga’s Strongholds in 2017 and 2013

<i>County</i>	<i>President vote margin 2017</i>	<i>Turnout 2017</i>	<i>Governor endorsed?</i>	<i>President vote margin 2013</i>	<i>Turnout 2013</i>
Machakos	63.32	0.76	Indep.	76.31	0.84
Vihiga	80.27	0.73	No	Mudavadi won	0.83
Homa Bay	98.85	0.84	No	98.69	0.94
Kitui	61.92	0.76	No	64.77	0.85
Taita Taveta	43.37	0.72	No	68.38	0.81
Kakamega	75.85	0.74	Yes	61.21	0.84
Bungoma	37.91	0.74	Yes	22.13	0.86
Busia	74.36	0.78	Yes	77.2	0.88
Siaya	98.45	0.83	Yes	98.16	0.92
Kisumu	95.68	0.7	Yes	95.31	0.9
Migori	70.76	0.83	Yes	76.41	0.92
Makueni	82.33	0.78	Yes	85.71	0.85
Mombasa	40.79	0.59	Yes	45.98	0.66

In sum, with the exception of Luo Nyanza and Machakos, there is evidence that gubernatorial candidates benefitted from presidential candidates’ coattails in parties’ respective strong-holds, conditional on aspirants actually receiving an endorsement. Down-ticket candidates certainly operated under the assumption that endorsements would make their wins a foregone conclusion, and this assumption was widespread not just among candidates for governors, but among those for senators, MPs, MCAs, and women representatives. Presidential candidates and central party operatives, on the other hand, feared that taking sides in down-ballot races would jeopardize their mobilization efforts and hurt their overall election chances. The presidency is still seen as the ultimate prize in Kenyan elections and parties prioritize the presidential vote, even at the risk of losing down-ticket races.<sup>46</sup>

These fears appear exaggerated. Significant dents in presidential vote totals in candidates’ strong-holds were the result of down-ballot candidate defections to the main competitor, not endorsements of parties’ ticket holders when the latter were facing popular independents. Disgruntled aspirants, like Meru’s Peter Munya, who had vowed to campaign against the presidential candidates or threatened their voters would stay home, eventually came round and re-joined parties’ mobilization efforts. Offers of government positions to ‘losers’ no doubt played a role in ensuring compliance in Jubilee strongholds.<sup>47</sup> But even in opposition strongholds, and where voters did not heed endorsements (like in Luo Nyanza), Odinga’s winning margins were not affected. Thus, endorsing candidates for down-ballot races did not hurt presidential candidates’ chances in their respective strongholds.

Not endorsing candidates, on the other hand, clearly puts lower level party positions in danger. While the majority of the Jubilee and NASA governor aspirants in the parties’ respective strongholds who did not receive endorsements *did* go on to win their races in 2017, one (Laikipia’s Joshua Irungu) lost his seat, and others (Embu’s Martin Wambora and

Mandera's Ali Ibrahim) came very close to losing. Such "interrupted" coattail effects in the strongholds could lead to down-ballot candidates losing to independents, which could weaken party structure and morale, incentivize defections in the future, and result in increased fragmentation in both houses of Kenya's parliament.

It is important to note that the evidence presented here is suggestive, not conclusive, given significant concerns about the reliability of the voting figures for both 2013 and 2017 and the absence of clear-cut counterfactuals. This is one fruitful area for future research on the effects of the introduction of 6-piece voting on competition for the presidency in Kenya.

### ***Reverse coattail effects in the 2017 election***

Is there evidence of reverse coattail effects – or presidential candidates receiving a boost by being associated with popular down-ticket candidates in Kenya in 2017? There is a long history in Kenya of electoral victories being cobbled up by "big men" forming alliances and rallying their respective ethnic bases behind a presidential candidate in exchange for government positions.<sup>48</sup> Kenya's devolved Constitution created another set of desirable positions – notably those of governors - which could be auctioned off in exchange for supporting the presidential ticket. The old logic of elite accommodation and alliance building extends to competition for the gubernatorial positions in the battlegrounds.

The two competing alliances actively sought to identify and ally themselves with popular local leaders in the hope of boosting presidential votes.<sup>49</sup> This was seen as the main way to win races in the swing areas, beyond the use of projects, or appealing through targeted campaign messages and formulating policy proposals.

Unlike in the strongholds where presidential candidates were apprehensive in making endorsements for fear of depressing turn-out, in the battlegrounds there were strong incentives to visibly associate with a popular local candidate. The highly personalised and ethnicised nature of politics in Kenya dictates that the strongest coattail effects should be present where a presidential candidate clearly associates with a popular local aspirant for governor. But could there be incentives to also withhold endorsements in the battlegrounds? The most obvious reason for a presidential candidate not to endorse a gubernatorial candidate when the latter is popular locally is for fear of upsetting coalition partners. Like in the strongholds, the campaigns may also hope that allowing candidates from different parties within the same coalition to contest for the same seat would bring out their voters and increase turn-out favouring the presidential ticket.

This is risky, however, as it could undercut governor aspirants' standing locally, particularly if an opponent receives an endorsement by a competing party. In Kenya, like elsewhere in Africa, leaders' popularity in their home areas is conditional on and enhanced by being recognized "outside" - by other communities.<sup>50</sup> By denying formal endorsements to gubernatorial candidates, presidential candidates would implicitly be denying recognition for local candidates' leadership abilities and national standing, thus undermining the latter's legitimacy locally. In such cases, presidential candidates would not be able to fully benefit from popular local candidates' reverse coattails, even if local candidates pledged to support and mobilize voters for the presidential candidate. Candidates also have incentives to campaign *against* each other for down-ballot races. This is commonplace in democracies, but negative campaign tactics in Kenya in the past have included intimidation, violence, hate

speech, disinformation campaigns, the spreading of rumours etc.<sup>51</sup> Such tactics can create an environment of fear and confusion among voters, and depress turn-out overall.

Counties where governors outperformed their parties' presidential candidates are cases where reverse coattail effects should account for at least some of presidential candidates' vote margins. Examining the vote margins for governor and president across the 2017 battlegrounds suggests potential reverse coattails for Kenyatta in Kwale, Lamu, Garissa, Wajir, Samburu, Narok, and Nairobi, and for Odinga in Trans-Nzoia and Kisii (shaded in grey in Table 5).

Table 5. Vote Margins and Turn-out in Battleground Counties in 2013 and 2017

County	President margin of victory 2017	Governor margin of victory 2017	President margin of victory 2013	Governor winner endorsed?	Governor runner-up endorsed?	President winner 2017	Turnout 2017 (%)	Turnout 2013 (%)
<b>Jubilee Governors</b>								
<b>Kwale</b>	51.23	49.1	66.7 (Raila)	Yes	No	Raila	66	72
<b>Lamu</b>	1.05	1.12	11.96 (Raila)	Yes	No	Raila	71	84
<b>Garissa</b>	0.38	4.53	3.3 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Uhuru	70	80
<b>Wajir</b>	6.86	11.75	10.9 (Raila)	No	Yes	Uhuru	73	85
<b>Isiolo</b>	14.45	13.48	25.9 (Uhuru)	Independent endorsed by Jubilee	Independent backing Jubilee	Uhuru	72	87
<b>Samburu</b>	0.2	31.79	16.68 (Raila)	Yes	No	Uhuru	78	88
<b>Narok</b>	7.1	19.28	3.9 (Raila)	Yes	No	Uhuru	83	90
<b>Kajiado</b>	14.73	9.55	8 (Uhuru)	Yes	No	Uhuru	80	87
<b>Nairobi</b>	2.3	10.59	2.25 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Raila	73	82
<b>NASA Governors</b>								
<b>Kilifi</b>	68.51	49.81	74.4 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Raila	65	66
<b>Tana River</b>	5.7	1.97	26.9 (Raila)	No	Yes	Raila	74	81
<b>Turkana</b>	20.96	16.44	37.8 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Raila	85	76
<b>Trans-Nzoia</b>	9.62	17.51	8.79 (Raila)	No	No	Raila	77	82
<b>Kisii</b>	12.12	23.47	40.51 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Raila	75	84
<b>Nyamira</b>	5.51	2.43	37.3 (Raila)	Yes	Yes	Uhuru	74	84

I briefly focus on each in turn. In Kwale, incumbent governor Salim Mvurya defected from ODM to Jubilee during the 2017 campaign and became one of Jubilee's "point men" in the region. NASA's inability to agree on and field a single candidate for governor split the party's votes between Issa Kipera of ODM and Ali Mwakwere of Wiper.<sup>52</sup> The latter two governor aspirants held separate rallies, spread negative rumours about each other, and competed for attention during joint rallies with NASA principals.<sup>53</sup> Skirmishes between supporters turned occasionally violent, threatening to disrupt the presidential campaigns.<sup>54</sup>

Similar "sibling rivalry" also prevented NASA from fielding single candidates for governor in Lamu, Narok, Kajiado, Tana River, and Trans Nzoia. Analysts saw such vote-splitting as a major reason for NASA's poor performance in these battle-ground counties, particularly as Jubilee was able to solve intra-party infighting and put forward single candidates for governor.<sup>55</sup> The differences in how the two major parties handled down-ticket nominations in 2017 may also have incentivized some of the more popular incumbents to join Jubilee and abandon NASA.<sup>56</sup>

But is there evidence that NASA's split governor vote in the battleground counties hurt Odinga's election chances? In Kwale, Lamu, Samburu, and Narok the high popularity of Jubilee governors was accompanied by a significant drop in Odinga's vote margins compared to 2013: his vote share in Kwale dropped by 15%, in Lamu by 13%, in Samburu by 17%, and in Narok by 11%. Thus, it is likely that popular Jubilee governors were able to mobilize at least some of their voters to support Kenyatta in 2017.

It is also clear that **reverse coattails are not cumulative**: Kenyatta was able to benefit more from the coattails of a single Jubilee-backed governor aspirant than Odinga from the coattails of several NASA ones: outside of Kwale, Odinga's presidential vote margins (and vote totals!) were lower than the combined vote margins and totals of NASA gubernatorial candidates. Thus, to the extent that vote figures from 2013 and 2017 are accurate, the various governor aspirants of NASA parties did not channel all their votes into support for NASA's presidential candidate. The Jubilee presidential ticket was favoured both by their association with popular local governors, and NASA's inability to field a single candidate for the various lower level positions in the battlegrounds in Kenya in 2017.

Garissa is one of the clearest examples of reverse coattails for Kenyatta in the 2017 election because the popularity of candidates for governor and senator are determined independently of the campaigns. Governor Korane Ali Bunow outperformed Kenyatta both in terms of winning margins (4.53 to 0.38 percent respectively), and total votes cast (55'335 to 54'783). Local politics in Garissa is clan-based and the different clans select candidates for the various government positions according to a "Talamogge" sharing formula – an example of "negotiated democracy". The choice of governor for the 2017 contest was to be made by the dominant Abduwaq clan. In 2017, the clan withdrew their support from incumbent governor Nathif Jama Adam from Wiper over perceptions of wide-spread corruption and "failure to deliver on his mandate", and unanimously backed Korane Ali Bunow for governor.<sup>57</sup> With the gubernatorial election a foregone conclusion, Jubilee rushed to capitalize on their candidate's popularity and boost Kenyatta's vote count in Garissa. The party paraded Korane in numerous events, he was often photographed "welcoming" Uhuru Kenyatta and Vice President Ruto to the county, the three appeared in joint rallies, and Korane facilitated Kenyatta's meetings with clan elders.

Similar clan politics benefited NASA in Tana River. Negotiated democracy between the various clans meant that "those cleared by the council of elders are almost sure of victory".<sup>58</sup> In 2017, the agreement meant that the governor would be elected from Galole constituency.<sup>59</sup> The incumbent governor, Hussein Dado, who had been elected on a Wiper ticket in 2013 but defected to Jubilee in early 2017, hailed from the Bura constituency. Despite a vigorous and very well-funded campaign, he was unsuccessful in defending his seat against the former Galole constituency MP, Dhadho Godhana, who contested the governorship on an ODM ticket. While NASA was able to keep the governorship in Tana River, and Odinga won the presidential vote in the county, the party's inability to rally behind Dhadho hurt their winning margins. Dhadho won with 29.66% of the vote, but Wiper candidate Abdi Nassir came third with 25%. Odinga's winning margin was 6% in 2017, down from 27% in 2013, and much less than the combined voting margins of the ODM and Wiper candidates for governor.

In contrast, where NASA parties could agree on a single candidate for governor<sup>60</sup> and that candidate also had the backing of elders in another case of negotiated democracy – Kisii – the winning margins for both president and governor were larger. Winnie Mitullah examines the role of negotiated democracy in Migori in 2013 and shows that the practice was key to

ensuring the minority Kuria community backed Odinga for president in exchange for the majority Luo agreeing to reserve the Senator and deputy governor position for the Kuria.<sup>61</sup> This suggests that negotiated democracy can increase reverse coattail effects for presidential candidates by building cross-ethnic alliances in plural constituencies.

Finally, in Nairobi, Jubilee governor Mike Sonko outperformed Odinga (and Kenyatta) both in terms of winning margin and total vote count. Split-ticket voting where voters chose Odinga for president and Sonko for governor is likely given Sonko's popularity in Odinga strongholds such as Kibera and Mathare.<sup>62</sup> But did Sonko's Jubilee affiliation translate to additional votes for Kenyatta in Nairobi? Jubilee campaign operatives certainly hoped this would be the case.<sup>63</sup> Analysts argued that Sonko was able to mobilize voters for the president in 2013 by exciting the city's Kamba population who "adore him".<sup>64</sup> While it is difficult to determine to what extent votes for Sonko translated into votes for Kenyatta in 2017 using the current methods and data, it is certainly plausible that had Sonko been a NASA candidate, Kenyatta's votes in Nairobi would have been fewer.

In sum, there is suggestive evidence of reverse coattail effects in Kenya in 2017 in battleground counties with negotiated democracy (mostly in the country's North-East and parts of the Coast). These favour the presidential candidate whose party ticket the selected local gubernatorial candidate appears on. Because of the prestige and resources attached to the gubernatorial positions, these are likely to be decided by the majority or plurality ethnic groups locally, so governors are likely to have the largest support and therefore the strongest reverse coattails. As there can be significant costs to going against elders' decisions, candidates selected for the various local positions are less likely to face serious challenges.

In some ways, therefore, negotiated democracy in Kenya fulfils a number of functions disputed party primaries cannot: it identifies the candidates with the most local support, reduces tensions between different local communities, and ensures fewer challengers. By reserving some positions for local minorities, it also allays the larger risks of hyper-majoritarianism in ethnically diverse settings. Negotiated democracy has a "dark side", however: it is not transparent, and not always inclusive, it can encourage corruption and rent-seeking behaviour on the part of king-makers, concentrates opportunities and resources, and does not incentivize candidates to address local interests and development challenges so it further entrenches poverty.<sup>65</sup>

Failure to agree on a single candidate for local positions in the battlegrounds obviously hurts parties' chances to secure those positions. But it also hampers parties' ability to capitalize on the popularity of local candidates and increase support for the presidential ticket nationally through a reverse coattails effect. Party unity and institutions are key in this respect.

The Kenyan case underscores the importance of party organisation and the presence of transparent and democratic procedures for candidate selection at the local level. Such procedures are necessary to ensure a legitimate local mandate to lead and forestall challengers. Ichino and Nathan find that party primaries lead to reverse coattail effects in Ghana because parliamentary aspirants invest significant resources in securing the nomination, build patronage networks in the process, and incentivize active participation in the party organization among party members.<sup>66</sup> *As long as defeated candidates and their supporters do not defect to another party*, their resource investments during the primaries lead to increased turnout favouring parties' presidential ticket during the general election.

Thus, reverse coattail effects are conditional on party unity, in battleground constituencies in particular.

## **Conclusion and Broader Implications**

In this paper, I make three main arguments about gubernatorial coattail effects in Kenya – a new feature of politics in the country since the adoption of the 2010 Constitution. First, in the absence of strong and well-organized parties and the personalistic and ethnicized nature of politics, coattail effects are conditional on public endorsements of gubernatorial candidates by the presidential contenders. Second, in presidential candidates' strongholds – often their ethnic bases – gubernatorial candidates have incentives to seek endorsements, while presidential candidates have incentives to withhold endorsements for fear of depressing turnout. Finally, in the battlegrounds, presidential candidates have incentives to ally themselves with popular local leaders and trade access to party tickets in exchange for votes in the hope for reverse coattails.

I find evidence of this logic in the 2017 Kenyan election. Observed endorsement-seeking behaviour by gubernatorial and presidential candidates across the strongholds and battlegrounds confirm the above expectations. There was also evidence of coattail effects for governors who did receive endorsements in the presidential candidates' respective strongholds of Central Kenya and parts of the former Coast, Western, and Nyanza provinces. Reverse coattail effects appeared to be present in counties with negotiated democracy where gubernatorial candidates with strong local support unequivocally allied themselves with a presidential ticket. Presidential candidates were also able to make inroads into opposition territory on the reverse coattails of popular governor aspirants.

Much was made of the risks of openly endorsing down-ticket candidates, particularly in parties' strongholds during the election campaigns. I find that these risks were exaggerated: there were no significant differences in presidential vote totals or margins between cases when endorsements were made and when they were not. At the same time, a treacherous coattails logic and an overwhelming focus on the demands and tactics of the presidential race posed very real dangers of losing lower level government positions to independents in parties' strongholds. This practice can lead to further party and legislative fragmentation. There are also significant risks associated with *not* endorsing candidates for governor positions in the battlegrounds or swing areas. Infighting regarding local government positions among NASA's constitutive parties cost them not just governorships, but presidential votes as well.

The decision of whether to offer endorsements of down-ticket candidates or not can be seen as an example of a larger coordination problem parties in Kenya face in the absence of established and reliable institutions and procedures. Negotiated democracy can help solve this coordination problem in some areas of the country. Another way to resolve it would be to establish democratic, transparent, and inclusive procedures for party primaries and enforce them. Party primaries can be effective mechanisms for identifying popular and high valence candidates for various positions.<sup>67</sup> When run under transparent rules and procedures, they can limit defections.<sup>68</sup> And when defections are limited, candidates have incentives to work with parties whose primaries they have invested significant resources in, improving party institutionalisation in the long run.<sup>69</sup>

Gubernatorial coattail effects in Kenya are only beginning to manifest. Further research can measure the magnitude of these effects and better tease out some of the underlying mechanisms linking endorsements with turn-out in particular. It could extend the analysis to other elected positions and probe whether similar endorsement logics apply. A third fruitful area of further research would be to study how coattails combine with preferences over issues to influence voting for local and national candidates. Research on voters' reasoning for selecting candidates for different government positions in 2013 shows significant variation, which is unusual in concurrently-held elections.<sup>70</sup> This suggests that the ability of endorsements to translate into votes may be limited by the intensity of voters' preferences over issues. Even popular candidates with extensive patronage networks may be hampered by being 'on the wrong side' of a salient political issue locally.

Beyond parties' immediate concerns with winning elections and maximizing votes, coattail effects have implications for citizen-politician linkages, service delivery, and democratic accountability in Kenya and beyond. It is therefore important to consider the extent to which coattails are desirable in the first place. Kenya's devolved Constitution intended to redress imbalances in resource distribution and service delivery, bring government closer to the people, increase communities' voice in politics, and usher in a new political elite that would be more service-oriented and developmentally-minded. Split-ticket voting and the absence of coattails could signal voters' increased demand for accountability and service delivery in the country.

Both in 2013 and in 2017, governor aspirants who did not receive endorsements were forced to campaign on their own merits: they had to rely on their records and invest their own resources in courting various communities. This can be beneficial, particularly in highly impoverished and marginalized areas. Coasting on someone else's coattails removes incentives to perform well, connect with the electorate, and be held accountable. Coattail effects also favour incumbents and are likely to further exacerbate the highly uneven political playing field in the country. Kenyan voters' vociferous rejection of calls for "6-piece voting" throughout the country is an indication their increased say in politics is appreciated and will be jealously guarded. Parties should take this into account as they devise ways to best capitalize on candidates' coattails and reverse coattails in the future.

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## Notes:

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- <sup>4</sup> “Uhuru’s tough balancing act as he pursues Mt Kenya vote”, *The Standard*, 8 July 2017.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis, “Decentralisation in Kenya.”
- <sup>8</sup> Cornell and D’Arcy, “*Plus Ça Change ?*”
- <sup>9</sup> Martha Karua, Anne Waiguru, Charity Ngilu and Peter Kenneth are just a few of the politicians with national profile who entered the race for governor.
- <sup>10</sup> Ames, “The Reverse Coattails Effect.”
- <sup>11</sup> Ichino and Nathan, “Do Primaries Improve Electoral Performance?”
- <sup>12</sup> Throup and Hornsby, *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*; Rutten, Mazrui, and Grignon, *Out for the Count*; Wanyama, “Voting without Institutionalized Political Parties”; Willis and Chome, “Marginalization and Political Participation on the Kenya Coast”; Gona, “Changing Political Faces on Kenya’s Coast, 1992–2007”; Mitullah, “Negotiated Democracy: A Double-Barrelled Sword.”
- <sup>13</sup> ‘Three piece suit’ refers to calls for voting straight ticket for presidential, parliamentary, and local candidates in Kenya since 1992.
- <sup>14</sup> Miller, “Presidential Coattails.”
- <sup>15</sup> Miller, 354.
- <sup>16</sup> Ames, “The Reverse Coattails Effect”; Broockman, “Do Congressional Candidates Have Reverse Coattails?”
- <sup>17</sup> Campbell and Sumners, “Presidential Coattails in Senate Elections.”
- <sup>18</sup> Egner and Stoiber, “A Transferable Incumbency Effect in Local Elections”; Cox, “How Electoral Reform Might Affect the Number of Political Parties in The Netherlands”; Langston, “Governors and ‘Their’ Deputies”; Samuels, “The Gubernatorial Coattails Effect.”
- <sup>19</sup> Campbell and Sumners, “Presidential Coattails in Senate Elections.”
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- <sup>21</sup> Oloo, “The Contemporary Opposition in Kenya: Between Internal Traits and State Manipulation,” 100.
- <sup>22</sup> Throup and Hornsby, *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*, 445–51.
- <sup>23</sup> Throup and Hornsby, *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*; Rutten, Mazrui, and Grignon, *Out for the Count*; Gona, “Changing Political Faces on Kenya’s Coast, 1992–2007”; Oloo, “The Contemporary Opposition in Kenya: Between Internal Traits and State Manipulation.”
- <sup>24</sup> Kanyinga, “‘Mix-and-Match Parties and Persons’: The 1997 General Elections in the Meru and Embu Regions of Kenya’.”
- <sup>25</sup> Ames, “The Reverse Coattails Effect.”
- <sup>26</sup> Oloo, “The Contemporary Opposition in Kenya: Between Internal Traits and State Manipulation”; Wanyama, “Voting without Institutionalized Political Parties.”
- <sup>27</sup> Throup and Hornsby, *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*, 412–17; Oloo, “The Contemporary Opposition in Kenya: Between Internal Traits and State Manipulation.”
- <sup>28</sup> Throup and Hornsby, *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*; Rutten, Mazrui, and Grignon, *Out for the Count*.
- <sup>29</sup> Masese, “Negotiating History for Negotiated Democracy: The Case of Kisii County in 2013 Kenya Elections,” 137.
- <sup>30</sup> Data on endorsements was collected from news clippings, rally recordings, and campaign press releases. At least two sources were used for each observation.
- <sup>31</sup> Muchui, David, “Uhuru Laikipia visit Yield Bittersweet Fruit for Hopefulls Eyeing Various Seats”, *Daily Nation*, 30 July 2017.
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- <sup>34</sup> Wanjohi, John, “Blow to Kabogo as Uhuru Endorses Waitutu for Kiambu Governor”, *Mwakilishi*, 19 June 2017, online at: <http://www.mwakilishi.com/article/kenya-news/2017-06-19/blow-to-kabogo-as-uhuru-endorses-waitutu-for-kiambu-governor>, last accessed 9 March 2018.

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- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Quoted in ibid, p. 205
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